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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR.

Cooking Eggs to Conserve Food Value.

An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman and Mrs. Fanny Walker Yeatman, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 49 associate NBC radio stations, Tuesday, April 11, 1933.

--ooOoo--

VAN DEMAN:

How do you do, Everybody:

Last week, you remember, Dr. Munsell told about her studies on the vitamin D content of eggs. She mentioned also how rich eggs are in vitamin A and vitamin G, and in iron and phosphorus, and how high they rate as a source of protein. It's hard to do justice to a food like eggs in a few minutes and give a fair idea of what the scientists have discovered about its food values.

Mrs. Yeatman, maybe you'll find it just as hard to cover all the points about cooking eggs. What one are you going to put first?

YEATMAN:

Well, when it comes to cooking eggs, I always think of them first as protein. We talked not long ago about the effect of heat during cooking on the protein in fish. No matter how I cook fish I keep the temperature moderate as much of the time as possible. And I follow this same principle in cooking eggs. In fact, you can't find any better example of what heat does to protein than to cook one egg at very high temperature, and another at moderate temperature. The intense heat quickly sets the protein of the egg and makes it hard and leathery. The moderate heat gradually coagulates the protein but leaves it tender and soft.

VAN DEMAN:

When you are poaching eggs then, Mrs. Yeatman, you don't keep the water boiling, I take it.

YEATMAN:

No, indeed. My standard for a poached egg is one with a tender white, almost translucent like jelly, that stands up well all around the yolk. To poach an egg so that it looks like that, I break the egg into boiling salted water deep enough to cover. Then I take the pan off the fire, and cover closely so as to hold in the heat, and let the egg stand for about five minutes. When I lift the poached egg up on a perforated spoon and let the water drain off it looks just as I've described.

VAN DEMAN:

That is, if you had a good fresh egg to start with. But of course poaching is the sure test of a high quality egg. How about serving poached eggs on toast with an asparagus sauce. Have you ever tried that?

(over)

YEATMAN:

No, but it sounds very good. A nice smooth sauce, with fresh cooked asparagus cut up in it, I suppose. In making the sauce I'd use some of the liquid the asparagus was cooked in to save food value and give more flavor. That's a good suggestion; I'm going to try it. There are almost endless ways to serve poached eggs to give variety. I believe my favorite way is Eggs Benedict. They start with toasted rounds of broad or toasted English muffins, then thin slices of ham, poached eggs next, and Hollandaise sauce over the top.

VAN DEMAN:

And counting all the egg yolks in that Hollandaise sauce that is an egg dish all right. Now to go back to this principle of moderate heat in cooking eggs. You're one of the home economics people, aren't you, who doesn't believe in boiling eggs in the shell?

YEATMAN:

Yes, I certainly am. And I don't care how much I'm laughed at, as long as I can help people to cook eggs right. I believe in cooking eggs in the shell -- cooking them so they're soft or so they're hard, not boiling them. I never let the water go above the simmering point.

VAN DEMAN:

Do you mean you put the eggs into cold water and heat it gradually to the simmering point?

YEATMAN:

Yes. That's my way of cooking eggs in the shell. I allow about a cup of water to an egg and I put a little wire rack in the bottom of the saucepan to keep the eggs from coming in direct contact with the heat. You know the albumen of egg is extremely sensitive to heat and I want my eggs cooked evenly, not more on one side than another.

VAN DEMAN:

Mrs. Yeatman, sometimes when I'm cooking only one or two eggs I get that same effect by coddling them. I drop them into boiling water, cover the pan, and take it off the fire. This gives the whites that tender jelly-like appearance, you described in the poached egg.

YEATMAN:

Yes, that's a very good way to cook an egg for a young child or for an invalid's tray.

Now, let me give you just a suggestion about hard-cooking eggs for the children's Easter baskets or for picnics. If you're coloring the eggs you want to keep the shells from cracking so the eggs will be good to eat. I think you'll have no trouble if you put the eggs on in cold water, bring them slowly to the simmering point, and keep them at this moderate temperature for about half an hour.

VAN DEMAN:

By the way, hard-cooked eggs cut in quarters and served on toast with creole sauce are delicious. I make the creole sauce with canned tomatoes slightly thickened and seasoned with chopped onion and green pepper or parsley. If I have a little cooked ham I chop it and put it in, or sometimes I add bits of crisp fried bacon. Mrs. Yeatman, we've talked about poached eggs and hard-cooked and soft-cooked eggs. How do you follow the idea of moderate temperature in scrambling eggs?

YEATMAN:

That's easy. I scramble eggs in a double boiler. As soon as the water in the lower part of the double boiler begins to bubble I stir the milk and egg mixture constantly, and I add butter and salt and pepper to season. I always make a point of serving scrambled eggs on hot plates, because they cool so quickly.

VAN DEMAN:

Well, Mrs. Yeatman, we'll certainly have to continue this chapter on cooking eggs. We haven't got around to omelets, or custards, or meringues, or shirred eggs, and ever so many more. Thank you for coming today. We'll expect you again soon.

Goodbye, Everybody, for this time.

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